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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000370

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; USPACOM FOR FPA  
COMMERCE FOR ITA JEAN KELLY

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: MOFA ON DPRK MISSILES, ROAD MAP

REF: A. RANGOON 369

[B.](#) RANGOON 334

[C.](#) RANGOON 317

[D.](#) RANGOON 306

Classified By: COM Carmen M. Martinez for Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[11.](#) (C) SUMMARY: MOFA Political Director General U Thaung Tun, covering a range of political issues, reiterated to COM on March 18 the GOB's position that Burma has refused North Korea offers to buy missiles and has no intention of resuming diplomatic relations with DPRK. He that although the GOB is still training technicians in nuclear technology, Burma has shelved plans to build a nuclear reactor with Russian help. On internal issues, he reported that the National Convention (NC) will be held this calendar year and that GOB Ministries have already appointed delegates. U Thaung Tun categorized UN Envoy Razali as being "upbeat" on his recent visit, though Thaung Tun admitted he was out of the loop on Razali's meetings with ASSK. He tantalizingly predicted that the pre-May 30 level of interaction between MOFA and the U.S. Embassy are about to resume, and urged the COM to "keep knocking because the door is about to open." Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi will visit Burma next week to discuss economic issues. END SUMMARY.

TIES WITH DPRK

[12.](#) (C) During a March 18 meeting to discuss HIV/AIDS (reftel A), MOFA Political Director General U Thaung Tun told COM that with regard to restoring diplomatic relations with North Korea "we had a lot of overtures from them, but don't really want them." He reiterated a GOB position recently put forth by the Deputy Foreign Minister (ref C) and said that the DPRK has "offered to sell us missiles, but we don't have any dealings with the North." Since the DPRK is also a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Burma has invited them to send a delegation to the ARF meeting in Rangoon in mid-April (ref B). U Thaung Tun has not heard yet if the DPRK will attend, and recalled that they didn't attend the November ARF meeting he co-chaired in Beijing, although that was due to the concurrently running six-party talks.

NO MORE NUKES (FOR NOW)

[13.](#) (C) U Thaung Tun told COM that the government has shelved its plan to build a nuclear facility with Russian assistance. He stated that Burma's gas fields provide enough energy to meet Burma's current needs. However, he added that Burma continues to train the technicians that would have been needed for the nuclear project, although he did not offer an explanation.

THE CHINESE ARE COMING

[14.](#) (C) The DG also told us MOFA is preoccupied for the next week with preparations for a looming visit by a Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi. Also a State Council Member with an economic portfolio, Wu's visit will be focusing on economic issues, and was arranged to reciprocate Maung Aye's visit to China last fall.

PM DIALOGUE WITH ASSK

[15.](#) (C) Asked how the recent visit of UN Special Envoy Razali (red d), U Thaung Tun told COM he agreed with the UN press release and say Razali "was upbeat." He added however, that "we don't know the details on the visit, those are kept on a need-to-know basis." Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt is focused on political progress in Burma, and as evidence the DG cited the PM's meeting with the KNU in January to achieve the cease-fire. Thaung Tun tried to underscore this further by explaining that the PM's un-named "high-level emissaries," though not the PM himself, are meeting with ASSK and there is an important dialogue now going on.

RAZALI AND THE ROAD MAP

16. (C) The COM noted Razali's suggestion that PM Gen Khin Nyunt should be given a "full mandate" implies there is a division in the leadership. Thaung Tun responded that is was more a question of Razali judging Burma from the fact that "we have a collective leadership," but quickly added that the leaders "have a consensus now and will move forward with it." He added that everyone has to have a say in the NC, including the political parties, the ethnic nationalities, and the KNU. COM noted that this should logically mean the ASSK will be released and the NLD allowed to participate, whereupon Thaung Tun demurred slightly and said that he didn't want to differ from the Deputy Foreign Minister's logic on this question.

17. (C) Thaung Tun told COM that the "PM says the NC will be held this year," and that every Ministry has already been asked to name representatives. (NOTE: Americas Division Director U Thant Kyaw told Poloff that MOFA officials only of much higher rank than his will attend.) The COM advised the DG that if the NC isn't held this year, Burma will have no credibility on the world stage. Thaung Tun said he agreed with the COM on this, and added that "the PM is a serious person. To not succeed wouldn't only look bad for him, but would invite chaos." The DG noted that as proof of the PM's intentions, intense physical preparations for the National Convention (NC) were being made at a place outside Rangoon. The NC must have room for all the delegates, including from the armed groups. He thought there would be 800 to 1,000 delegates vice the 700 delegates for the 1993 convention.

BETTER MOFA-U.S. EMBASSY TIES?

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18. (C) The COM asked Thaung Tun if he has passed on the Embassy's requests for loosening restrictions on MOFA staff contacts with U.S. Embassy officials and restoring the level of Embassy access to GOB officials to pre-May 30 levels. The DG responded that the message has been passed, and for the COM to "keep knocking, the door's about to open."

19. (C) COMMENT: The DG's unexpected but not-surprising tidbits on their relationship with North Korea indicate that the generals are concerned about current U.S. attention to Burma-DPRK dealings. As to the better Embassy-MOFA ties that Thaung Tun hinted were soon coming, those would likely accompany the opening of the door for ASSK and the NLD and the announcement of the national convention. However, there is no official date for the NC, and ASSK is still under house arrest. END COMMENT.

Martinez